

providing an envelope into which an artefact is received;

sucking air from an open end of said envelope to cause a transfer support to adhere to said artefact; and

heating said artefact and said transfer support to transfer a pattern from said transfer support to said artefact;

wherein said step of providing said envelope comprises forming said envelope from said transfer support so that said open end is defined by edge portions of said transfer support.

36. A process, comprising:

covering an artefact resting on a work bench with a transfer support;

sucking air between said transfer support and said work bench to cause said transfer support to adhere to said artefact; and

heating said artefact and said transfer support to transfer a pattern from said transfer support to said artefact;

wherein said step of covering comprises laying said transfer

support over said artefact and along selected portions of the periphery thereof and said step of sucking air occurs through a plurality of holes of said work bench so as to cause said transfer support to adhere to said work bench at least at said selected portions.

37. The process according to claim 35, wherein said transfer support comprises a first sheet placed above said artefact and a second sheet placed under said artefact.

38. The process according to claim 36, wherein said transfer support comprises a sheet which is placed above said artefact.

39. The process according to claim 36, wherein, during said step of covering, said work bench is kept in a substantially stationary position.

40. The process according to claim 35, further comprising the step of removing said transfer support from said artefact after handling and/or installing said artefact.

41. The process according to claim 36, further comprising the step of removing said transfer support from said artefact after handling and/or installing said artefact.

42. The process according to claim 35, wherein said transfer support is made from gas-tight thermoformable plastic material.

43. The process according to claim 36, wherein said transfer support is made from gas-tight thermoformable plastic material.

44. The process according to claim 42, wherein said gas-tight thermoformable plastic material is polyvinyl alcohol.

45. The process according to claim 43, wherein said gas-tight thermoformable plastic material is polyvinyl alcohol.

46. The process according to claim 42, wherein, after said step of sucking air, the process further comprises the step of submitting said artefact and said transfer support to a first intermediate heating action at a temperature at which said transfer support is thermoformed.

47. The process according to claim 35, wherein said step of heating occurs at temperatures between 200°C and 230°C.

48. The process according to claim 36, wherein said step of heating occurs at temperatures between 200°C and 230°C.

49. The process according to claim 35, wherein said step of heating lasts between 30 seconds and 30 minutes.

50. The process according to claim 36, wherein said step of heating lasts between 30 seconds and 30 minutes.

51. An apparatus, comprising:

enclosing means for enclosing an artefact into an envelope;

sucking means for sucking air from an open end of said envelope to cause a transfer support to adhere to said artefact;
and

heating means for heating said artefact and said transfer support to transfer a pattern from said transfer support to said artefact;

wherein said enclosing means comprises forming means arranged for forming said envelope from said transfer support so that said open end is defined by edge portions of said transfer support.

52. An apparatus, comprising:

covering means for covering an artefact resting on a work bench with a transfer support;

sucking means for sucking air between said transfer support and said work bench to cause said transfer support to adhere to said artefact; and

heating means for heating said artefact and said transfer support to transfer a pattern from said transfer support to said artefact;

wherein said covering means comprises laying means arranged for laying said transfer support over said artefact and along selected portions of the periphery thereof and said work bench is provided with a plurality of holes through which said air can be sucked so as to cause said transfer support to adhere to said work bench at least at said selected portions.--

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this patent application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

(1) The Examiner has rejected claims 12 and 20 under 35 U.S.C.